

# San Diego DX Club Bulletin



June 2013



It is with deep regret that we  
record the passing of

**N6ND**

**Rick Craig**

**1943—2013 SK**

The San Diego DX Club (SDDXC) is among the best known and most highly respected DX clubs in the United States. Since it's founding in 1946, SDDXC members have been on both sides of the pile-ups with DXpeditions and a fair share have achieved "Top of the Honor Roll" status. If you're interested in chasing DX, contesting, exchanging stories or just rubbing elbows with fellow "Big Guns" or "Little Pistols", you'll feel right at home at one of our club meetings. Join us at our next meeting. Visitors are particularly welcome!

For real time DX spotting and lively conversation on a variety of subjects, join us on 144.415 MHz.

## PROGRAM:

RON N6XT WILL TELL US ABOUT HIS DXPEDITION TO SAMOA, ETC.

## MEETING NOTICE:

**JOIN US AT THE SIZZLER , NO CHANGE THIS MONTH  
AERO DRIVE & MURPHY CANYON RD**

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26, 2013**

**SOCIAL HOUR, 5:00 P.M.      DINNER, 5:30 P.M.**

**MEETING, 6:30 P.M**

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## A Word from the Prez . . .

*John Barcroft, K6AM*



Hope you got your hotel reservation for Visalia. I'm not sure the pileup-on-the-phone method is the most efficient anymore. I'm going to suggest we try to perfect the on line method. Also, the Marriott changed their reservations date to two weeks later at the last minute, too late for the other hotels to re-schedule. The result was that a lot of folks reserved rooms at the Comfort Suites and then cancelled if they got into the Marriott. To top it off, some of the Marriott staffers were a bit confused and were saying callers needed to somehow go through convention chairman, Mel, K6SY whose name was on the overall Convention reservation. The good news is the Comfort Suites, which was sold out, is no doubt getting a pile of cancellations. So if you still need a nearby room, give 'em a call and get on their list if they have one. Or call one of the other nearby hotels. Maybe there will be a shuttle again next year.

The election is normally scheduled for this month, unless of course, all the nominees run unopposed. That's just how things turned out at during nominations at last month's meeting, so they were all elected by acclamation at that time. Please welcome Dan, N6ERD as your new President, Wild Bill, WB6BFG as VP/program chairman, and John Vissat, NA6L, as the new board member. In addition, Ellen, N6UWW will stay at her post another year with our thanks.

So I bid you all adio as your President with this column. My thanks to Dan, N6ERD for his fine job as VP, outgoing board member Les, NN6K for his three years of service to the club, and Gayle, K6GO for an extra year as past President. Also thanks to our continuing board members, Ed, AI6O, and Bob, N6OX and to our new bulletin editor Ron, N0RR, and webmaster Arnie, W7BIA for their continuing fine work keeping the lifeblood of the group flowing. And of course thanks to you for your support of our Club.

The Sizzler remodel is still on the back burner (back burner... get it...) so we'll see you there.

THE JUNE MEETING WILL BE AT THE SIZZLER.

CU There.

*73, John, K6AM*

## Secretary/Treasurer's Report

Ellen, N6UWW



President John Barcroft, K6AM, opened the May 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting at Sizzler & welcomed another packed house (39). Guests were introduced: David KI6VIA, John N0CTL. New members were voted on and approved for membership: Ron Stuart WA6JEF and Mike NA6MB. A "Big Gun" Award was presented to Paul WN6K.

After a call for nominations, Gayle KK6GO presented the slate of officers (Pres – Dan N6ERD, VP – Wild Bill WB6BFG, Sec/Treas – Ellen N6UWW, Board of Directors– John NA6L, Past Pres – John K6AM, Board – Ed AI6O, Board – Bob N6OX) and elections were held as all running were unopposed.

Les NN6K was thanked for his service to the Board. Harry W6YOO announced that he will be accepting updates via e-mail (w6yoo@cox.net) for the club's call (W6PT) listing on QRZ.com. Tom N6JOJ thanked everybody for their contributions to the tip basket.

Wild Bill WB6BFG announced in the absence of Sec/Treas Ellen N6UWW that \$250 was sent to the ARRL Spectrum Defense Fund per the club's actions at the last meeting. John K6AM reminded the group of our donation to NCDXF which was presented at Visalia and pictured in last month's Bulletin.

SANDARC is looking for volunteers to staff the booth at the Del Mar Fair Contact is KC6QLS@cox.net.

A roundtable discussion ensued.

### Treasurer's Report

87 members

Statement Balance 5/31/2013 \$6492.14

Ellen, N6UWW

## Editor's Ramblings

Ron, N0RR

This is a tribute issue to two former members, now silent keys, who will be remembered as early stakeholders in the SDDXC, instrumental in shaping the club and its legacy. Special thanks to Glenn K6NA and Jim W6YA for documenting the lives of Rick N6ND and Bud W6PBI, respectively.

Thanks to everyone else who provided input this month. I will roll your material into the July issue.

To give everyone as much advance notice as possible, here is the executive summary version of the BASH announcement. Details to follow in the July issue.

**The SDDXC Summer Bash date is August 11<sup>th</sup> at K6NA's QTH**

To keep the tributes pure and the page count reasonable, here are a few short items of interest that I wanted to include in June.

For Sale by W6AQ:

I have a Palstar AT-Auto, 1500 watt antenna tuner. I've used it for 5 or 6 years and had zero problems with it. Read the reviews on eHam. This is in like new condition. I have the DVD that came with it, original invoice, and instructions. \$950 firm. [W6AQ@aol.com](mailto:W6AQ@aol.com).

Joe W6VNR inquires:

I was wondering if we could put out a survey of the best places to advertise ham gear for sale. For example: #1 eBay, #2 QTH.com, #3 ???

If anyone has any other suggestions, send them to Joe

Enough of my ramblings. Read on and enjoy the stories and pictures from and about our former members.

Ron, N0RR

## THE SDDXC TOP 10 (EXPANDED VERSION)

By John, K6AM

TOTAL BAND-COUNTRIES WORKED								TOTAL BAND-COUNTRIES WORKED – Cont'd							
6/13	6/12	CALL	ZNS	C-D	CFM	WKD	CHG	6/13	6/12	CALL	ZNS	C-D	CFM	WKD	CHG
1.	2.	K6AM		2651	2703	2721	+2	11.	14.	AD6ZJ	323	1610	1622	1732	+215
2.	3.	N7CW	376	2526	2526	2715	+84	12.	15.	WB6BFG	315	1461	1471	1648	+201
3.	7.	K6XT	352	2452	2509	2663	+309	13.	13.	NN6K	226	1513	1539	1539	-70
4.	5.	W6YI	360	2255	2301	2623	+131	14.	-	NA6L	300	1256	1257	1523	NEW
5.	4.	N6CW	360	?	2300	2606	-	15.	16.	N6VS	280	1359	1377	1445	+63
6.	6.	W6YA	348	?	?	2389	-	16.	17.	W6CN		1206	1228	1314	-
7.	8.	K0XB	341	2172	2205	2272	+94	17.	18.	N6XT	231	898	933	1255	-
8.	9.	W6YOO	306	2107	2144	2144	+15	18.	-	K5OA	227	801	820	1014	NEW
9.	10.	K6ZH	323	1885	1920	2110	-	19.	19.	K9RHY	201	962	975	975	-
10.	11.	WN6K	324	1539	1567	1916	+184	20.	20.	N6KI		369	377	975	-

Some nice big jumps again this time in the TBC category, the granddaddy of DX'ing. Notably, John, NA6L jumps on the chart at number 14 having worked something like 1000 band countries in the past year alone. K6XT says he worked 309 new ones! (must be a typo), while Bud, N7CW blows past the 2500 level for the DXCC Challenge.

With the tragic loss of N6ND from the #1 position with an astounding 2892 worked, everyone moves up this year. The guy in the lead appears to have hit the "wall" allowing the rest of the pack to catch up fast. I'm sure NN6K's 70 point drop is to correct a previous error, and not him giving back QSO's. There's plenty of room to make a decent gain in this category by getting on those bands where your totals are still low. Things should remain hot as we crest the top of the cycle. For the TBC list, we are showing the first 20 places to accommodate the large number of entries in this category.

Each month, we will publish a top ten list for one of the lesser-recognized but hard won categories. Coming up next, 6/160 and digital followed by phone and CW. Please send me your totals for each band throughout the year and you will be listed in coming months. Use the convenient form at <http://www.sddxc.org> or bring 'em to the meeting.

### 2012 CQ WORLDWIDE PHONE DX CONTEST—SDDXC RESULTS

CLASS	CALL	SCORE	QSO'S	MLTS	FINISH
MS - HP	W6YI (+N6KI N6WIN, N6MJ, K6AM)	6,803,634	3,696	703	<b># 1 ZONE 3</b> <b>NEW W6 RECORD</b> # 11 NA
MS - HP	NX6T (ops N6KI AF6WF K6KAL WQ6X N6NC N6ERD NA6MB)	1,351,779	1,281	429	# 3 W6, # 5 ZONE 3
SO HP 10M	ZF2AH (W6VNR)	1,073,806	3,410	137	<b># 1 NA.</b> <b># 1 ZONE 8</b> # 6 WORLD
SO - HP	K6NA	21,760	95	80	
SA - HP	K5OA/6	558,180	715	215	# 9 W6
SA - HP	N6NC	87,354	230	138	
SA - HP	AF6WF	58,800	168	140	
SO - LP	NN3V	693,792	967	297	# 2 W6, # 5 ZONE 3
SO - LP	WN6K	367,500	575	245	# 3 W6, # 10 ZONE 3



## A Tribute to Rick, N6ND (SK)

We lost long time SDDXC member Rick to cancer in April of this year, just three months before his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday. With assistance from other DX Club members, I've assembled a few recollections and notes to honor him and his amateur radio career, and help us remember Rick going forward. Raymond (Rick) Craig had a great impact on the club and amateur radio in general, and he advanced the state of the art in DXing and radio contesting in significant ways.

Rick and his brother (now W6TMD) were licensed in high school in Idaho. After college, Rick moved to San Diego for employment at the Naval Electronics Lab. I first met Rick, then W6JOT, in the very early '70s when DX Club meetings were held at the Convair Gun Club facility above Gillespie Field (DXC member Frank, W6QNM was a Senior Manager at Convair). Rick lived on a small lot in Santee, where his early interests were in building dune buggies and camping with the family in the desert. Although he was a degreed electrical engineer, he was a real hands-on guy, a welder and car mechanic who loved the hardware. For radio, Rick had a cubical quad on a spindly tower, and was becoming interested in DXing. He had an old Swan transceiver, but soon converted to a Drake 4Line.

That quad became the subject of a funny story (well—funny *now*) when it came crashing down one Saturday, while the rookie tower crew was attempting to take it down with a homemade gin pole. At least, nobody was hurt. And, lessons were learned.

At Santee, Rick eventually acquired the N6ND call sign in early 1977. He had Hy-Gain monobanders on a Rohn 25 tower, and he was working everything that came along. He had maxed out with hardware though, and soon discovered a new challenge. In his daily commute to Naval Ocean Systems Center (formerly NEL), on the top of Point Loma, Rick discovered the Point Loma Radio Club, a 'recreational' club station and part of the lab facility. The PLRC call sign was W6RDF.

With Rick's enthusiasm, the club became more active. Eventually there were monoband Yagis installed on several towers at 'the bunker' location just south of the outdoor antenna test range. Rick tried multi-multi DX contesting from the RDF site, sometimes using his own call, and he was hooked. Of course the site was a fantastic radio location and even with short towers, they competed very well. They had a secret weapon, based on an idea from W7RM: The beachside antenna, shielded to the east.

There was a short pole downslope a bit on the west facing side of the steep hill. Rick and the RDF crew installed a 15 meter monobander on that pole, and it was a killer to the Pacific. For JA runs especially, it was a fantastic receiving antenna which provided huge attenuation of USA signals from the east.



K7NV and N6ND at K6TQ (Dec 2008)

Two of Rick's co-workers at the Lab—WB6QGN and W6ZUM (SK)—were infected by the DX bug due to Rick's enthusiasm. They both became long-time DX Club members (John, WB6QGN, is now KE7D and retired in Arizona).

In the late '70s and early '80s, the manufacturers were introducing a slew of new rigs, as the solid-state revolution progressed. Rick became interested in receiver design and performance, and made a real contribution to state of the art receiver design.

There was pressure on ARRL and others to publish more meaningful performance numbers. N6ND had access to the right measuring equipment, so he started using it! At HRO during that period, we loaned him every significant new radio for testing, and Rick freely shared his factual results with anyone interested in receiver performance. I'm certain the manufacturers saw some of these performance tables that Rick and others provided, thus keeping general pressure on the designers subsequently to produce "better" radios for the ham market.

Rick remained active in SDDXC and was generous with his time for members and non-members alike. He participated in countless tower raisings and antenna parties, lending his tools, expertise and good cheer both to friends and casual acquaintances alike.

In the mid '80s, N6ND was DX Club President on two occasions. He also took on the job of monthly updating the members' DX Ladder and Standings lists, and provided handouts at the meetings for many years.

Rick's interest in ethical contest operating led him to an appointment on the CQ WW Contest Committee, where for a few years he was a volunteer log checker in the days of paper logs. He also enjoyed operating the WW DX Contests from Mexico a couple of times.

Around this time N6ND was itching to move to the countryside, with more room for antennas and a significant station. In 1985 Rick and Myrna acquired the hilltop land north of Ramona, and built a house there. Actually, the two 100-foot

Rohn 25 towers were put up before the house was finished. That's enthusiasm! N6ND constructed the guy anchors, the guys and the foundations over a few weeks. Then, on a given Saturday morning we had actually two crews of climbers and ground men, starting at the same time, to see which team could complete its tower soonest.

No one remembers which tower was finished first, but the crews (safely) enjoyed the "race" and the hearty lunch served that day! Antennas soon sprouted from the towers.

Rick was interested in all the latest technology, and thus became an early proponent of the use of AK1A Packet Cluster software for DX chasing. Initially the local network he helped sponsor and support used RF links on VHF/UHF to connect nodes and users, most of whom had surplus dumb terminals to display the data. N6ND was the go-to guy on packet technology, and as "Node Mother" he offered help and assistance to all who needed it. Of course personal computers in the shacks started to replace the dumb terminals, and eventually the Internet became the backbone of most DX-spotting data networks. Rick was there at the beginning and evolution of all of it.



Rick enjoying ice cream aboard a Navy research ship



N6ND (seated) visiting Bruce in the K0YW shack

N6ND embraced the computer revolution heartily and helped nudge many other DX Club members into the brave new world of PCs. In the late '80s/early '90s there were many small retailers where one could buy all the boards and modules needed to "roll your own" cheap computer. So Rick used to build his PCs, integrating them into the ham shack, and encouraged many of us to do the same. We learned a lot by doing so, and it seemed Rick was always available on 144.415 simplex to offer suggestions and trouble-shooting.

N6ND had become interested in computer-modeling of antennas, in the early 80s, when he encountered the important series of Ham Radio Magazine articles on the subject by Jim Lawson, W2PV. With Lawson's information, Rick wrote some rudimentary computer code which allowed him to start modeling Yagi antennas. Another DX club member, WB6FZC (now K6JRF), was also doing this, and the two men often compared notes.

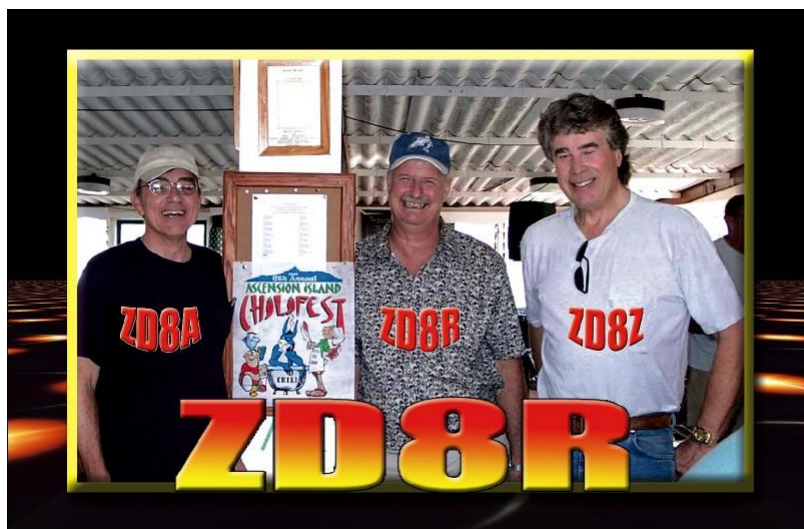
In the late '80s, and into the '90s, former DX Club member Brian, K6STI, wrote revolutionary software programs in DOS for designing wire antennas, multi-element Yagis, and even a Yagi Optimizer. These programs allowed builders to translate the recipes into real-world mechanical antennas that worked as predicted. N6ND was probably the most important beta tester for K6STI software, contributing greatly to its commercial success. His homebrew antenna performance helped validate the software. Rick's library of antenna files was available to anyone who asked. Rick loved modeling antennas on computers, and often donated his time and expertise to help many DXers (even outside the local area) achieve better antenna designs.

A 195 foot tower was added to the N6ND arsenal in the 1989-90 time frame, to aid in the multi-multi DX competitions. Rick designed and built a homebrew two element Yagi for 80 meters, and installed it on the new tower. Also on that tower were three homebrew stacked, large 20 meter Yagis, all independently rotatable, and some wire antennas.

The 80 meter Yagi with 108-foot elements had a failure the first year, so of course Rick fixed the design flaw and put it back up; it lasted about 8 years before a very strong storm finally destroyed the antenna. Around 1997, Rick installed a large 4 element, 40 meter Yagi on top of that tower, and the remnants of it remain there today.

The potent antenna farm was used daily by Rick, but also was shared with many other visitors who came to operate there in contests. They enjoyed the multi-multi competition atmosphere, with loads of current technology, hosted generously by Rick and Myrna. Many of today's best Southern California operators got their feet wet at the N6ND events, and Rick really liked the technological and social aspects of the game.

Of course, Rick was an excellent operator himself, and loved CW especially. A Google search finds that Rick is the current Single Op (A) Single Band record holder for W6, on both 15m and 20m in the CQ WW CW DX contest.



For 2011, the K6NA/W6YI stations were chosen by ARRL to use the W1AW/6 Headquarters call sign in a multi-multi effort in the July IARU contest. N6ND's antennas were mostly in disrepair at the time. Rick joined the effort enthusiastically, loaning an amplifier and becoming 'network builder/administrator' at the K6NA station, for some days ahead of the contest. Much of the credit for the success of this event thus goes to Rick, N6ND.

During the past few years, Rick was very busy with family matters and occasional consulting trips. His antennas and rotators suffered from neglect due to these time constraints. Rick and I talked often about what we needed to do, in order to get the antennas up to snuff again. I helped him with a couple of minor repairs, but most of the larger repair tasks had not been scheduled yet. It's still a shock to realize-- with N6ND now a Silent Key, these repairs won't need to be done.

Every ham who was touched by Rick will remember in his own way the N6ND amateur radio legacy. For me, it will be a classic mix of amazing talents and relentless technology advancement, combined with the power of the homebrew art form: "First make it work—then make it pretty."

Perhaps more significantly, Rick will be remembered fondly for his kindness, humility, good humor, and generosity to DX Club members, the larger amateur radio community, and others around him.

RIP, Rick N6ND!

**--Glenn Rattmann, K6NA**

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I remember Rick as one who was always ready to help solve problems for others. He was one of the kindest people I know, always ready to solve problems. He was eternally ready to do anything that would help the ham community as a whole. Rick was a pioneer in developing the local DX packet system that preceded the internet clusters. He put countless hours into building several 2m nodes to cover the county. I'll always remember one of his favorite expressions: "It's not supposed to be that hard!"

-W6YA

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I will miss Rick in the "Bustin Heads" CW DX pile-ups in which we would both call !

The DAHS & DITS of our calls when laid out end to end are IDENTICAL and at 30+ WPM our suffixes were only distinguishable by a few milliseconds of character spacing, thoroughly confusing the DX Op !

.. ..

.. ..

73, Dennis N6KI

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In 1980 I installed my first tower the Tri-Ex LM470. I was very new to DX'ing at the time. A call for "HELP" to help 'hoist it up' to "The Club" at that time brought a lot of the regulars including Mr. Dx N6ND. I was surprised that he made the way to help me..... a new dx'er, I will never forget him. He never failed to give me a contest point where ever I operated from a DX location.

W6VNR Joe



I knew Rick both through work (we both worked at the Navy Lab on Pt Loma, although in different areas); and, of course, via ham radio - and primarily through the DX Club. My first specific memories of Rick were doing major Field Day operations from the Pt Loma ARC with him, Jim W6YA, Art K6XT, and other DXers. We hauled out a lot of gear and antennas in order to take advantage of that wonderful QTH. [John K6AM et al have continued the tradition the past several years]

I also operated 2 years at Rick's as part of CQ WW CW multi-multi teams. These were major engineering feats by Rick to put all this together in his garage! One year we had Santa Ana winds - and we were drawing sparks off everything we touched. The next year we were totally socked in with damp fog - and we were drawing sparks off everything we touched! But in both cases, everything worked flawlessly.

On several occasions Rick came to my QTH to do tower work - all of my major installs. The first was putting up my TX-455 tower in 1992, and soon after installing a 40-2CD and a TH-7 on the tower. In '95 we had to take down the antennas as I went to London for 2 years. Then it all was put back up in '97. In about 2009 I bought a 4-element SteppIR from Harvey K6QK's estate, and once again Rick was there to help take down the TH-7 and install the SteppIR. He also made and installed a rotating 30 meter dipole to fill in that band. And on several occasions when something went wrong on the tower, Rick would willingly come to fix whatever was needed. Occasionally we could get a sandwich and a beer down him as a small 'thank you', but he never asked for a thing.

And finally Rick was always available by phone and/or e-mail to answer those questions I have had over the years - from little 'nit-picky' things to larger issues of antenna performance. I would think "Rick will know the answer to that," and he always did!

Willing to help, selfless, low key but effective, technically brilliant - these are just some of the appropriate adjectives to describe Rick. We miss you, buddy. 73 - Jim, K6ZH

# Remembering Bud Veregge, W6PBI

Bud, born in 1922, was the *last surviving charter member of the San Diego DX Club*. First licensed as W6PBI in 1937, he took the examination in San Francisco along with Bob Leo, W7LR, who was then licensed as W6PBV. Bud and Bob remained friends for all the years afterward.

Bud died on June 1, 2013. It was Bob who sent me the news the next day.

Immediately after WWII, Bud was stationed in China, operating as XU1YO. With his BC-610 and SX-28 he worked many interesting stations, such as AC3SS, AC4RF, and AC4YN. During that time he contacted W6GRL, Charlie Stuart, a famous DXer from Ventura who had V-beams on the beach. Charlie's history is covered extensively in the W6AM book.

When W6GRL went to Nanking, China, in 1946, to build a station to communicate with the USA, he was active as XU6GRL. W6PBI then made the reverse contact from California that had taken place when he was in China and Charlie was in Ventura.

In 1946, after his China duty, Bud returned to Woodside, CA, and in 1949 moved to San Diego. He spent 12 years in the Marine Corps, from 1942. He eventually moved to Canoga Park, where he worked for HP, Lockheed, and Hughes at various times.

Bud was a long time friend of Dick Shanks, W6BZE, the "father" of the SDDXC. In 1949 he became a charter member of SDDXC and regular member of So. Calif DX Club.

When Bud retired from Hughes in 1988, he moved to his present 2 acre location in Gardnerville, Nevada, which gave him the chance to put up some good low band antennas. Over the years he was active in contests and chasing DX, mostly on CW. Around 1990 he got the 160m bug, and managed to work over 200 countries on that band. His top band receiving antennas were two beverages, a flag, a rotatable delta, and a shielded loop. His 160m transmitting antenna was a 70' top loaded vertical with 32 radials. I noticed his top band QSL from A61AJ.

For the past several years Bud had been inactive. I last talked with him just 2 weeks before he died. You may remember Bud as a familiar face in Visalia, during every year since 1992.

.....W6YA

